CONTEMPORARY EDITIONS

MARGARET OLLEY

MARGARET OLLEY IS ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST CELEBRATED AND LOVED ARTISTS. ALTHOUGH HER EARLY SUBJECTS INCLUDED LANDSCAPES AND PORTRAITS, OLLEY ROSE TO PROMINENCE IN THE 1960S FOR HER PAINTINGS OF STILL LIFE AND COLOURFUL INTERIORS.

BORN IN LISMORE IN NORTHERN NSW, SHE CAME TO SYDNEY FROM BRISBANE TO STUDY AT THE EAST SYDNEY TECHNICAL COLLEGE IN THE EARLY 1940S, FROM WHICH SHE GRADUATED WITH FIRST CLASS HONOURS. SHE HELD HER FIRST SHOW IN 1948 AND EXHIBITED AT LEAST ANNUALLY IN ALL MAJOR CITIES IN AUSTRALIA FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS. DURING HER LONG CAREER SHE WAS A PIVOTAL FIGURE IN THE AUSTRALIAN ART SCENE. AS WELL AS BEING ONE OF THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED ARTISTS OF HER GENERATION, SHE WAS RENOWNED AS A BENEFACTOR AND SUPPORTER OF YOUNGER ARTISTS.

IN 1990 SHE ESTABLISHED THE MARGARET HANNAH OLLEY TRUST, WHICH IS DEVOTED TO PURCHASING WORKS OF ART FOR PUBLIC COLLECTIONS AROUND THE COUNTRY. SHE WAS AWARDED AN ORDER OF AUSTRALIA IN 1991.

OLLEY WAS TWICE THE SUBJECT OF AN ARCHIBALD PRIZE-WINNING PAINTING—THE FIRST BY WILLIAM DOBELL IN 1948 AND LATER FOR A WORK BY BEN QUILTY IN 2011. MARGARET CONTINUED TO PAINT, DESPITE HER DETERIORATING HEALTH IN HER LAST YEARS, AND HAD COMPLETED A NEW BODY OF WORK FOR AN EXHIBITION AT PHILIP BACON GALLERIES WHEN SHE PASSED AWAY ON 26 JULY 2011 AT HER HOME IN SYDNEY'S PADDINGTON.

OLLEY'S PAINTINGS ARE HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER BY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLECTORS BOTH IN AUSTRALIA AND AROUND THE WORLD.